

Terms and Conditions
German Design Graduates 2026

Datum: 26. März 2026

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

German Design Graduates is organised annually by the German Design Council Foundation (GDC). The following terms and conditions form the binding and exclusive contractual basis for participation in German Design Graduates 2026 between the GDC, the participating higher education institution and the graduates.

Any conflicting or deviating terms and conditions of the participating university and/or the graduates shall not apply, even if the GDC does not expressly object to them in individual cases.

2. PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Participation in German Design Graduates is organized in two stages:

2.1. Universities:

A limited number of universities will be nominated for participation in April 2026. Authorized representatives of universities may submit nomination proposals to the German Design Graduates project management at any time. Registration of the university must be completed by an authorized representative no later than May 4, 2026.

2.2. Graduates:

After a university has registered, its graduates from the last two semesters (May 1, 2025 to April 30, 2026) in the following fields of study are eligible to submit their final projects:

Product and Industrial Design
Communication and Digital Design
Textile and Fashion Design

Registration is binding for both universities and graduates.

Eine Stiftung des
bürgerlichen Rechts

USt-IdNr.: DE114237464
Steuernummer: 04724890008

Geschäftsführer:
Lutz Dietzold

3. COSTS

3.1. Universities:

The participation fee per university is €2,000 net per year.

3.2. Graduates:

Submission is free of charge for graduates of participating universities. If selected for an exhibition, costs for model production as well as travel and accommodation must be covered by the participants themselves, unless otherwise agreed.

4. SUBMISSION

4.1. Universities:

Communication materials about the university (logo, texts, images) must be submitted by authorized representatives via email after payment of the participation fee by June 1, 2026.

Submitted materials include text and images about the university, study programs, and professors. All information will be checked for completeness.

4.2. Graduates:

Graduates must submit their final projects themselves. Individual and group submissions are permitted. The submitted work must be the participant's own final project.

Submission takes place via a restricted-access online form.

All participating graduates in 2026 are eligible to take part in the German Design Award – Newcomer 2027 and will be contacted separately for this process.

5. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

5.1. Final projects that infringe any intellectual property rights (trademarks, brand names, utility models, patents, or similar) are excluded from participation. Each participating graduate must inform the GDC whether any legal proceedings (trademark, patent, copyright, or similar disputes related to the submitted project) are pending in connection with the submitted final project. The participating graduate shall be solely liable for any damages, in particular claims by third parties arising from a breach of these conditions, and shall indemnify the GDC against all claims upon first request.

5.2. Copyrights to the submitted final projects and promotional materials of the university (photos, videos, and texts) shall remain at all times with the respective participant. In particular, participating universities and graduates must ensure that appropriate usage rights (e.g., for photos) are in place. The participating graduate or participating university shall be solely liable for any damages incurred by the GDC as a result of a breach of these (possibly insufficient) usage rights.

5.3. Within the scope of the competition, participating universities and graduates grant the GDC unrestricted usage rights to the provided image and text materials for publications as well as press and promotional purposes.

5.4. Photos and video recordings taken on behalf of the GDC at events will be used exclusively for documentation, reporting, and promotional purposes. By registering, participating universities and graduates agree to this use. This consent may be revoked informally at any time (e.g., via email to presse@gdc.de or in writing to the GDC).

6. LIABILITY

6.1. Liability for damages arising from the use or non-use of the information provided on www.germandesigngraduates.com, www.germandesigncouncil.com, and in press texts is excluded to the extent permitted by law. By linking to the websites of participating universities and graduates as well as to video content on platforms, the German Design Council Foundation (GDC) merely provides access to such content. This does not imply approval of the content of third-party sites. Therefore, no responsibility is assumed for the availability or content of such websites, and no liability is accepted for damages or injuries arising from the use of such content of any kind. The respective provider of the site is solely responsible. At the time of the initial linking, the GDC checked the external content for potential civil or criminal liability. However, subsequently added content cannot be continuously reviewed. As soon as the GDC becomes aware or is informed that a specific linked content gives rise to civil or criminal liability, the link will be removed immediately.

6.2. If selected as an exhibitor, an exhibition of the final project is planned for autumn 2026. If projects are exhibited or demonstrated in operation, they must comply with German legal and occupational safety regulations, in particular accident prevention regulations, and must be equipped with the legally required safety devices. The participating graduate shall be solely liable for any damages caused by the exhibited items and shall indemnify the GDC against any third-party claims for damages.

6.3. The risks of transport for the shipment of exhibits to the exhibition are borne solely by the participating graduate. The GDC undertakes to inform the participant immediately of any visible transport damage upon receipt of the exhibits. For exhibits delivered from abroad, all necessary customs formalities must be handled independently and at the participant's own expense. The GDC strongly recommends taking out transport insurance. The items must be delivered in packaging that is suitable for return shipment and secure for transport.

6.4. During the exhibition period, the GDC or the museum will provide insurance coverage for the exhibits.

6.5. The GDC will provide transport insurance for the return shipment of the exhibits. If no adequate and reusable packaging is provided, the GDC assumes no liability for any damage occurring during return

transport. General liability for loss or damage to the exhibits or for damages of any kind is excluded, unless the GDC, its legal representatives, or agents are guilty of intent or gross negligence; liability for negligent behavior is limited to a maximum amount of EUR 1,500.

6.6. If the online gallery, exhibition, networking events, or workshops cannot take place in full or at all due to force majeure, no claims may be derived by the participants.

6.7. If a minimum number of participants for the exhibition is not reached, the GDC reserves the right to cancel the exhibition without replacement.

7. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE

Should individual provisions of these general terms and conditions be or become invalid or unenforceable after the conclusion of the contract, the validity of the remainder of the contract shall remain unaffected. In place of the invalid or unenforceable provision, a valid and enforceable regulation shall apply whose effects come closest to the economic objective that the parties pursued with the invalid or unenforceable provision. The above provisions shall apply accordingly in the event that the contract proves to be incomplete.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By submitting the application, the participating university and the participating graduate confirm that they have read and understood these terms and conditions. Acceptance of these terms and conditions is documented at the latest upon successful registration confirmation. A successful application is only possible after prior acceptance of these terms and conditions. This confirmation documents that the participating university and the participating graduate have read, understood, and accepted the terms and conditions. The participating university agrees to participate in German Design Graduates. The participating graduate agrees to participate in German Design Graduates.

9. JURISDICTION

The place of performance and jurisdiction of the contract is Frankfurt am Main. In business transactions with merchants, legal entities under public law, or special funds under public law, Frankfurt am Main shall be the place of jurisdiction for legal actions.

10. ORGANIZATION

German Design Council Foundation
Messeeturm
Friedrich-Ebert-Anlage 49
60327 Frankfurt am Main
Tel. +49 69 24 74 48-600
Fax +49 69 24 74 48-700
Email: info@gdc.de